

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 14590 050840Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 SNM-02 DEAE-00 AID-05

AS-01 /068 W

-----053342 050845Z /20

R 050800Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3861

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, TH

SUBJ: THAI HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION

1. EMBASSY OFFICER MET WITH DR. KOSON SRISANG, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THAILAND JULY 5 TO DISCUSS HUMAN RIGHTS. DR. KOSON IS THE CHAIRMAN OF AN ORGANIZATION CALLED THE COORDINATING GROUP FOR RELIGION AND SOCIETY (CGRS), WHICH FURNISHED INFORMATION USED IN A SERIES OF STUDIES THAT WERE ATTACHED TO TESTIMONY OF MR. STEWART MEACHAM BEFORE THE FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE JUNE 23. ACCORDING TO KOSON, THE GROUP'S AIMS ARE TO ENCOURAGE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, TO RELIEVE SUFFERING, AND TO PROMOTE RECONCILIATION AND UNDERSTANDING AMONG THE THAI PEOPLE. THE CGRS'S CHIEF CONCERN AT PRESENT IS THE WELFARE OF PERSONS DETAINED IN CONNECTION WITH THE GOVERNMENT CHANGE ON OCTOBER 6 AND THOSE ARRESTED UNDER NARC ORDER 22 SINCE THAT TIME.

2. CGRS MEMBERSHIP IS DRAWN PRIMARILY FROM RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN BANGKOK, INCLUDING THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, THE CATHOLIC COUNCIL AND BUDDHIST GROUPS. KOSON STRESSED THE POINT THAT CGRS IS NON-POLITICAL AND NON-SECTARIAN. HE SAID THAT THE GROUP'S EFFORTS TO DATE HAVE INCLUDED MONITORING THE NUMBER OF "POLITICAL" DETAINEES, VISITING PRISONS, CALLING ON WOUNDED

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SOLDIERS AND RELEASING INFORMATION TO ANYONE INTERESTED. THE CGRS ITSELF HAS NOT PUBLISHED ANY REPORTS ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THAILAND. RATHER, IT SIMPLY MONITORS EVENTS.

3. THE CGRS IS ATTEMPTING TO GAIN LEGITIMACY AND OFFICIAL RECOGNITION BY THE THAI GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO KOSON, THE GROUP PLANS TO APPLY FOR STATUS AS AN ASSOCIATION BY REGISTERING WITH

THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. THE GROUP RAISES FUNDS THROUGH CONTRIBUTIONS SOLICITED BOTH IN THAILAND AND ABROAD.

4. WHILE DR. KOSON EXPRESSED GENERAL CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THAILAND, HE AVOIDED SPECIFIC CRITICISM OF GOVERNMENT POLICY. IT APPEARS THAT CGRS VIEWS ITSELF AS A CLEARING HOUSE FOR INFORMATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND NOT RPT. NOT AS AN OPPOSITION POLITICAL GROUP.  
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
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22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009